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- Professional Reading

PUBLIC ATTITUDE SURVEY MOVES FORWARD

Data collection for the Public Attitude Survey is expected to begin immediately as the questionnaire has already been developed and pre-tested. Focus groups were held recently in Yarmouth and Dartmouth to assist in the design of the questionnaire and to collect some preliminary data. Approximately 10 people were selected at random from the telephone book and invited to come to the library to speak about their perceptions and wishes for the library. Questions centred around their current use, their perceptions of the current and future role of the library, their awareness and opinion of the library, and their attitude toward funding including alternate sources of funding. The results were very interesting and have provided some valuable guidance in designing a useful telephone survey. The focus group participants were generally very supportive and enthusiastic about the library, and had some specific suggestions for improvements. The focus groups were conducted by Mary Power of Omnifacts. A written report on focus group results is available from the Provincial Library. Contact Andrea John (ajohn@nshpl.library.ns.ca).

SUMMER READING PROGRAMME UNDER WAY

The Summer Reading Programme for 1996 is well under way. Every year the regional public libraries in Nova Scotia promote reading to children and young people through a number of library-based activities. The Provincial Library supports this effort by coordinating the tender and production of promotional items, by distributing these to the regional libraries and by acting as the project's financial coordinator. The Provincial Library also coordinates a province-wide grand prize, with this year's being graciously donated by H.H. Marshall.

In addition to the t-shirts, sweatshirts and posters that we always purchase, this year we ordered colourful pencils following a lead by the Cape Breton Regional Library last year. The pencils, as well as the t-shirts and sweatshirts, will be received in May. The posters have already been received at the Provincial Library and have been distributed to the regional libraries.

The regional public libraries use these promotional items in a variety of ways, depending on their needs. Some will use them as a fundraising venture, some will use them as prizes or as incentives to encourage children to read, and still others will use them simply to promote their local reading club activities.

Last year's dino-mite theme, "Be a Readasaurus/Soyez lectursaure", was the most successful to date. This year's pirate theme, "Books - the real treasure/Les livres - un vrai tresor", promises to be just as successful if not, dare I say it, even MORE popular! -- Sue Dirani

AVRL MOVE REPORT

After over 46 years in the old building the Annapolis Valley Regional Library is moving its headquarters operation to new facilities. For those who have not seen our wonderful building, we are currently in Annapolis Royal and we occupy what used to be an entomology lab (bug house). The building has 3 floors, including the basement which we use for storage, and has a total of 3600 square feet. We use a wooden elevator system, that was motorized about 9 years ago, to get books from the basement to the top floor.

Our new space is in Bridgetown, just 20 minutes away. It is in the former ADIL building which is now the Bridgetown Development Centre. We have 7400+ square feet plus the use of a common lunch area and washrooms. The area has been renovated specifically for our use with sufficient wiring and computer outlets. The most wonderful thing about it has to be that it is all on one floor.

We are all looking forward to the new location but it will be a real shock when we aren't tripping over each other. Although we are anxious for the move, we will all miss our cozy corners and the old "bathroom". The move takes place the week of April 29th and it will be an event in itself - you know what its like to have over 40 years worth of stuff to sort! There will be an official opening in May, so you'll be hearing more from us in the near future. -- Charlotte Janes, AVRL

PROGRESS OF UNION CATALOGUE STUDY

Jane Beaumont, representing Beaumont and Associates Inc., and Nordicity Group Ltd. gave presentations on the recommendations of their study on "Access to the Holdings of Nova Scotia Libraries" to members of the various library and related information-based communities the week of April 22. The far-reaching implications of these recommendations for the future exchange of information of all types across all sectors was discussed in relation to implementing a single-view electronic window to the contents of all Nova Scotia libraries - academic, scientific, public and government. A further report on these presentations will be included in the May issue of the DISSEMINATOR. The Executive Summary of the study report can be viewed by accessing the Provincial Library's homepage (http://rs6000.nshpl.library.ns.ca/execsum.html).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A document entitled "Local Telephone Service Pricing Options for Canada" has just been released by the Public Interest Advocacy Centre to provide information about telephone company and consumer groups options being proposed to the CRTC. Public hearings are starting on May 27 and Nova Scotia public interest groups may wish to access this document. It will be available shortly at "http://www.lglobal.com/connect/piac/".

A new book by Heather Menzies has just been published by Between the Lines Publisher entitled "Whose brave new world is it anyway? : the information highway and the new economy". Ms. Menzies is a regular visitor of Nova Scotia and was keynote speaker at the APLA conference in Charlottetown.

WIRED LIBRARIES: NEWS FROM THE FRONT LINES

As an example of how the Internet is being used in public libraries, the South Shore Regional Library recently had a patron who wanted to verify exactly what the federal Liberals had promised regarding the GST when they were elected. Previously, the library had had difficulty getting a copy of the Red Book but they were able to find it on the Internet in full-text.

At Annapolis Valley Regional Library, statistics show that the public access computers are being well used. AVRL maintains a list of search engines in their "Bookmarks" in Netscape to assist patrons with searches. On each branch's home page there are also helpful links such as Reference Picks, Kids Stuff and We Liked These. AVRL is also one of the first libraries outside of metro Halifax to provide e-mail accounts for their patrons through the Chebucto Community Net. The library has adopted a computer use policy which has been working well - it simply states that "In support of intellectual freedom, the Annapolis Valley Regional Library does not monitor and has no control over information accessed though the Internet. It is the user's or their guardian's responsibility". -- Andrea John

LINKed

Here are some more WWW sites to inform and entertain you. If you know of any interesting sites to include, e-mail me (sdirani@nshpl.library.ns.ca) and I'll list them here.

Atlantic Canada Careers
www.atl-can-careers.com
- a new WWW job service aimed at people looking for employment in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland/Labrador, and PEI. Don't expect speed as this site is heavy with "style".

APLA Web Site
www.stmarys.ca/administration/library/apla/apla1.html
- a new site for the Atlantic Provinces Library Association. It contains a wide range of information about the organization.

WebAcropol
www.mechan.ntua.gr/webacropol
- WebAcropol features a historical guided tour of the Acropolis of Athens, the imposing rock on which the Parthenon was built. The tour includes images, history and explanations.

The Dr. Seuss Page
klinzhai.iuma.com/~drseuss/seuss/
- Cat in the hat, The Grinch and more. Includes links and biographical info; everything you've ever wanted to know.

Sherlock Holmes
www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/andrew.cmu.edu/usr18/mset/www/holmes.html
- Large collection of online Sherlock Holmes books, pictures and sound clips. The site also contains links to other Holmes-related sites.

Quotations Home Page
www.lexmark.com/data/quote.html
- A large index of quotations, along with detailed reference information.

PROFESSIONAL READING

In this month's column, we are featuring books which deal with the two current library issues - user fees and promoting information literacy.

1) Information for a New Age: Redefining the Librarian. Compiled by the Fifteenth Anniversary Task Force of the Library Instruction Round Table of the American Library Association. Chicago: American Library Association, 1995. (Call # Prof .020 .973 Inf)

- This book is essentially a collection of award winning papers, presented in response to a competition of ALA's Library Instruction Round Table to celebrate its 15th anniversary as an organization. Virtually all of the articles deal with LIRT's central mission which focuses on the dissemination of ideas, suggestions, recommendations and research into information literacy and on the provision of practical assistance to librarians in school, public, college/university and special libraries.

2) Twice Paid: User Pays and Public Libraries. Edited by Diane Brooker. Adelaide: Auslib Press, 1993. (Call# Prof. 025 .11 Twi)

- In this book, the issue of user fees is examined from an Australian perspective. It is a collection of policy statements, articles, and case studies, the purpose of which is to provide "ammunition" in the form of articles and key documents to defend the concept of free and unrestricted access to library services. The editor of this book acknowledges the inherent bias in the selection of papers which present the argument against the concept of fee for service in public libraries. The dominant theme in this book is that the issue of user fees is not only a library issue but is also a public policy issue. -- Frank Oram